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Committee on Conferences
Substantive session of 2005

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Enno **Drofenik** (Austria)

VI. Other matters

1. At the 471st meeting, on 23 September 2005, the Chairman proposed that, since holding the Committee's substantive session in September required an exception to be made to General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985, and since many members had difficulty in attending in August, the Committee might consider holding its 2006 substantive session in June. Some delegations pointed out that a June date would considerably shorten the evaluation period on which the Secretariat was to report. It was decided that the Committee should take up the matter at its 2006 organizational session.

2. At the same meeting, the Committee considered a letter from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities requesting the Committee's assistance in ensuring that delegates with disabilities could participate meaningfully and on an equal basis with others in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee was addressed by the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee, who said that the most urgent need was for official documentation relating to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee to be made available in both electronic format and Braille. He also noted that Conference Room 4 was the only facility that could be adapted for access by some of the participants with disabilities. The Committee expressed support for meeting the needs of the persons with disabilities involved in the elaboration of the draft convention. It urged the Secretariat to ensure that the special requirements of the Ad Hoc Committee were taken into account in conference room scheduling and to explore ways of providing the required documentation in electronic form and Braille. Delegations felt that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly consider, on a priority basis, the question, both in the particular case, in the light of additional information to be provided from the Secretariat on the resources needed to make available the

requested documentation in Braille, and in terms of the larger issue of the access of persons with disabilities to conference services.

3. Also at the 471st meeting, the question was raised of the biennialization by the General Assembly of the agenda item entitled "Pattern of conferences". No decision was taken because delegations could not agree whether the Committee had a mandate to consider the question at its current session.

4. At the same meeting, the question was raised of recommending annual consideration by the General Assembly of the agenda item entitled "Multilingualism". No decision was taken because delegations could not agree whether the Committee had a mandate to consider the question.

5. Also at the 471st meeting, in view of the difficulties encountered by some delegations during the negotiations on the outcome document of the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, Committee members expressed the view that, in future, care should be taken in the scheduling of conference rooms to make certain that their size was consistent with the anticipated attendance in order to promote transparency and ensure the safety of the participants.